

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in reply to the Office Action of September 28, 2006. Revisions to the specification are proposed to correct typographical errors and to include the serial number of the referenced U.S. patent application on page 8.

In the Office Action, claims 1-2 and 5-25 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a). In support of the § 103(a) rejection of these claims, the following U.S. Patents were cited: Elsherif et al. (U.S. Patent 5,564,124), Curlee (U.S. Patent 4,756,306) and Patel (U.S. Patent 6,619,286). In characterizing the Elsherif et al. disclosure, the Office Action discusses “a main belt portion (112)” having certain features. The main belt portion (112) is never discussed in the specification of the Elsherif et al. patent. Further, there is no disclosure in the Elsherif et al. patent of a belt portion having a generally conical shape, as stated in the Office Action. In characterizing the Patel patent disclosure, the Office Action states that Patel discloses “a connection section/bracket (24) having a plurality of hinges (24a)”. However, there are no hinges disclosed in the Patel patent, let alone a plurality of hinges. The bracket 24 of the Patel patent is secured to a casing 15 by a rivet 24a that permits pivotal movement. Only one rivet is disclosed, and a rivet is in no way equivalent to a hinge.

In the Office Action, claims 3 and 4 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but it was indicated that those claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of claims 2 and 3, thus assuming the same scope as originally presented in claim 3, now presented in independent form. Applicants therefore submit that claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Likewise, claim 4 depends upon claim 3 and is likewise in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 5-25 all depend from independent claim 1. Since claim 1 is now in condition for allowance, dependent claims 5-25 should likewise be allowable. Favorable consideration is, therefore, respectfully requested for claims 1, 2 and 5-25.

In the Office Action, it was noted that claims 26-51 and 52-65 are allowed. While Applicants appreciate the comments in the Office Action regarding the allowance of these

claims, Applicants submit that these claims are allowable for other reasons as well. In addition, Applicants note that independent claim 52 does not specify a mounting clip for mounting a respiratory component to a main belt portion.

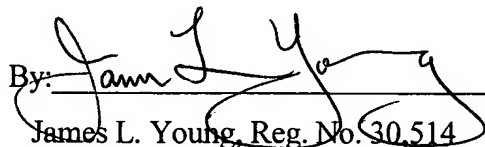
With this Amendment, claim 1 is amended and claims 2 and 3 are cancelled. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, and 4-25 are now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance for claims 1 and 4-65 is respectfully requested.

With this Amendment, Applicants have made an earnest effort to address all issues raised in the September 28, 2006 Office Action, and to place the claims pending in this application in condition for allowance.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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